

Plymouth Cast Academy Trust

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Head Teacher: Mr Neil McDermott BEng (Hons) MEd



'Together we will do
our best for Jesus'

4th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are all looking forward to welcoming you back to school next Monday 7th September. The new term will bring about a degree of adjustment for us all and all of the staff here understand that returning to onsite learning after many months may feel daunting to some. With this in mind, I have sought to answer any queries regarding school attendance that you may have.

Does my child have to return to school?

Yes, as of September 2020 the Department for Education has reapplied the law. It is compulsory for your child to receive a full-time education.

Why is it so important that my child returns to school?

We know school is the best place for children to be, because it's vital for their education, development and wellbeing. The government has made clear that this has been the Department's goal since scientific and medical advice indicated it would be safe to do so.

What happens if there is an outbreak in school?

If there is an outbreak at the school, school will follow the guidance given to us by the local health protection teams. We will then let you know.

My child is anxious about returning and may refuse to attend. What should I do?

It is understandable that many children may feel apprehensive about starting St. Joseph's or returning to school. We pride ourselves on our pastoral approach and ask that if you are having trouble with getting your child into school, that you please let us know so we can help.

What will happen if I don't send my child to school?

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where students will not attend school due to Covid-19.

- If anyone in your household presents with symptoms of Covid-19, please organise for a test to be taken. If you receive a positive result, all members of your household must self-isolate for 14 days. This absence will be recorded as authorised and there will be no sanction issued by the school or local authority for this non-attendance. If the member of the household tests negative, your child can stop self-isolating and return to school.
- In all cases of self-isolation, we ask that you please inform us immediately of the outcome of the test. We will not require evidence of either a positive or negative test and will warmly welcome your child back to school after their period of self-isolation.
- As usual, we ask that parents please plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to remove your child during term time which we cannot authorise. We ask that you also consider that your child may need to self-isolate following a trip overseas. If you are required to be in quarantine upon arrival home, there will be no sanction issued by the school or local authority for this non-attendance.

Sancreed Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 4DZ

Tel: 01202 741932 - Email: stjosephs@sjcp.co.uk - Website: www.st-josephs.poole.sch.uk

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I am a vulnerable person. What happens if we are required to enter a local lockdown?

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1st August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

We have been asked to pass on a link to all parents from the BCP council which is really informative. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzF-t5bULJM&feature=youtu.be>

I hope that this information has offered you with some reassurance and guidance. It is the school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up on absences on a daily basis. We will always seek to resolve low attendance through communication with parents.

Mr Neil McDermott
Headteacher